

## **BOROUGH, ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD**

\*Councillor Jenny Wicks (Chairman)

\*Councillor Liz Hogger (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Philip Brooker  
\* Councillor Nils Christiansen  
\* Councillor Andrew Gomm  
Councillor Angela Goodwin  
Councillor Nigel Kearse

\* Councillor Julia McShane  
\* Councillor Bob McShee  
\* Councillor Mike Parsons  
\* Councillor Mike Piper  
\* Councillor Matthew Sarti

\*Present.

### **BEI20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Phillip Brooker, Angela Goodwin and Nigel Kearse.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 23(j), Councillor Colin Cross attended as a substitute for Councillor Angela Goodwin.

Councillors Geoff Davis, Caroline Reeves and James Walsh were also in attendance.

### **BEI21 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

No disclosures of interest were submitted.

### **BEI22 MINUTES**

The minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 May 2016 were confirmed.

The Board received an update in relation to the Guildford Design Guide. It had been recommended by the Board at its previous meeting in May that the Executive should consider setting up a working group to oversee the emergence of the Guildford Design Guide. The Board, however already had powers to establish its own working group. Owing to a lack of resources currently, a working group could not be created immediately. The Board would be updated on progress to date at its next meeting.

The Draft Parking Strategy was also meant to have been circulated to all Board members in June. The Board noted that this would now be considered at their forthcoming meeting in September given that it had to first be considered by the Guildford Local Committee at its meeting on 22 June 2016.

### **BEI23 GUILDFORD TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION PLAN**

The Major Projects Portfolio Manager (Interim) gave a presentation on the Guildford Town Centre Regeneration Plan:

The Board was invited to provide views/comments on the document and raised a number of questions, including:

- *Considered the differences between the Town Centre Masterplan and Town Centre Regeneration Plan and how it would work in principle?*

- The Board noted that the Town Centre Masterplan was approved by Council in 2015 and was a guidance document only. The Regeneration Plan set out a vision of how the town would look in the future. Capital funding would be sought from Surrey County Council and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Regeneration could be carried out on Guildford Borough Council owned land whilst encouraging developers to work in partnership.
- *What were the current plans in relation to Guildford Bus Station?*
- The Major Projects Portfolio Manager confirmed that the bus station was located in a key development area. Various studies had been commissioned via SOC and ARUP to map current travelling patterns around the town. An aspiration of the Council was to create a transport hub at Guildford Train Station.
- *The ward councillor for Friary and St.Nicolas welcomed the proposed regeneration works within Guildford town and made the following observations in relation to how the plans could work in the longer term:*
  - *At Walnut Tree Close, two planning applications had recently been refused owing to flooding issues. Ward councillors and planners therefore held a meeting to work out how to mitigate these flooding issues for the future.*
  - *Mindful of the Property and Transport Group's vociferous comments about the lack of provision of office parking. Noted that Bedford Wharf was mainly earmarked for residential when it could be used for office parking.*
  - *Woodbridge Meadows could be used for residential housing and was not at risk from flooding.*
  - *Need smaller retail units rather than large retail units. The Pop-Up Village planned for Guildford was a good step forward, but would be good to have something in the longer term.*
  - *Offices could be built in Bedford Wharf with restaurants below rather than residential units, owing to the potential for noise disturbance and proximity to local nightclubs.*
  - *Housing provision needed to be mixed with small and affordable units that are not reliant upon cars.*
- *The BT telephone exchange was perceived as an eyesore and the Board was keen to know if plans were in place to secure its removal as well as what the Bedford Wharf site would be used for?*
- The Major Projects Portfolio Manager confirmed that there were no plans to remove the BT telephone exchange and plans were ongoing in relation to the development of the Bedford Wharf site.
- *Need to be careful not to overly focus upon retail provision around North Street to the detriment of the shops at the top of the town.*
- *Supported the development of the river, ensuring that it remained an open and vital gateway to Guildford town whilst not compromising the vitality of the High Street.*
- *Questioned the sense of having to drive around the gyratory to access the biggest car park in Guildford located in Bedford Road. Further work needed to be undertaken on improving the throughflow of traffic. Additional parking was also recommended at Portsmouth Road as well near the Royal Surrey Hospital.*

11 JULY 2016

- *The Board agreed that the river was vital and needed to be made more accessible between Bedford Wharf towards Shalford. In addition, a mix of housing, affordable housing and retail was required.*
- *Questioned whether more offices could be provided on top of the railway station?*
- The Board noted it was generally very expensive to employ labour in Guildford and therefore only a limited number of offices would be provided for start-up businesses and some corporate companies.

The Board fully supported the work plan and objectives for the regeneration of the town centre. The Board noted that the regeneration plan was to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 27 September 2016. The Board recognised the short time frame left for members to have further significant input into the plan. Nevertheless, the Board requested that they had sight of the report and any associated private papers at its next meeting on 12 September 2016.

[post-meeting note: It was agreed at the Joint Overview and Scrutiny and EAB Work Programme meeting that owing to the short-turn around the above topic would not be considered at the next meeting of the Board on 12 September 2016].

#### **BEI24 STOKE PARK MASTERPLAN**

The Parks and Landscape Manager gave a presentation on the Stoke Park Masterplan. The Board received an overview of the consultation process to be undertaken with existing users and other stakeholders to make Stoke Park a vibrant community park and visitor destination.

The Board was invited to provide views/comments on the document and raised a number of questions, including:

- The Lead Councillor for Rural Economy, Countryside Parks and Leisure drew the Board's attention to the financial summary for Stoke Park and was interested to know from the Board if they could identify any short comings?
- The Board acknowledged the need to steer a vision for the masterplan. Stoke Park had been very successful to date and wanted to sustain it to meet future community needs.
- The Board recognised the value of the park and did not want it to become overly focussed on money-making schemes.
- Catering provision could be improved in the park as well as at the Spectrum.
- Tennis court surface improvements needed. Funding could be sought via schemes such as the London Marathon Trust.
- Potential for public art installations.
- The Board noted that public attendance figures for Stoke Park Gardens had decreased and therefore recommended if it was possible to feature plants at certain times of year within glasshouses.

11 JULY 2016

- The Parks and Landscape Manager confirmed that the gardens had been closed for 6 months owing to pool refurbishment works. Wisley Gardens was also located close-by and the provision of glasshouses was likely to be costly.
- The Board noted that it was not obvious how to get from the corner of Stoke Park down to the river?
- The Parks and Landscape Manager confirmed that there was a well-maintained path to the riverside nature reserve and a walk was being put together for the Mayor in September 2016.
- Unclear if members of the public realised that there was a public car park at Wildwood?
- Recommended that a wooded play area with zip wires was created at the front of Stoke Park.

The following questions were submitted to the Board for their comment:

1. What form should a stakeholder and wide public consultation take to inform a masterplan?
  - A leaflet could be dropped to each house and a temporary structure erected in the park for the public to post written suggestions.
2. What are the views on the current and future usage for events, activities and sports, i.e. what should the output of the park be?
  - Considered that the output of the park was about right currently. The catering provision should be made more obvious and tasteful.
3. What are the views on the need for investment in the parks infrastructure and assets?
  - The Board noted that drainage was currently managed and under control;
  - Gardens, pathways, fences and trackways should be repaired and refurbished;
  - Listed structures would potentially require further investment and;
  - External suppliers consulted to provide improved catering facilities.
4. What should the scope of the masterplan cover?
  - The Board considered that the two halves of the park should be linked more cohesively via the Green Bridge and lock;
  - To assess whether all of the assets were currently located in the right place;
  - It was confirmed by the Parks and Landscape Manager that the Home Farm properties would be vacated to help fund the rest of the Masterplan;
  - To work closely with neighbouring residents, schools and colleges.
5. What are the views on the promotion of the park and engaging use in the site?
  - The Board agreed that current usage was about right for the park and significant promotion was not required.
6. How do we sustain the current highly successful output from the park?

11 JULY 2016

- The Board agreed that by investing in people's health and life chances visitor numbers would be sustained;
- This was quantified by a reduced number of sick days for businesses and the significant link to the health and wellbeing agenda;
- Wanted to strike a balance between intensifying the use of the park and the current use of the park;

7. What are the EAB's perceptions about community needs for the park?

- Should provide better toilets and changing facilities for runners;
- Need to support the health and fitness for the older demographic of Guildford;
- Provide improved facilities for people with disabilities and play equipment for children. [The Parks and Landscape Manager confirmed that there was a disabled toilet located next to the play area. A lot of the play equipment was inclusive too].

8. Comments on the project structure for developing the masterplan.

- The Board recommended that a working group was formed to visit other neighbouring parks.

The Board fully endorsed the formation of a project board. The Parks and Landscape Manager would be invited back to the Borough, Economy and Infrastructure meeting in a year's time to look at setting up a project board and how to take this forward.

**BEI25 EAB WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board noted that the parking strategy would be circulated to members. [post-meeting note: this item was to be considered by the Board at its next meeting on 12 September 2016].

The Board requested clarification as to why Sustainability Issues (including eco-living options and the impact of/adapting to climate change) was recommended for removal from the Corporate Plan? [post-meeting note: This item has been incorporated into 'Smart Cities – An energy, Climate Change & Sustainability Perspective' for consideration by the Society, Environment and Council Development EAB at its meeting on 20 October 2016.]

The meeting finished at 8.50 pm

Signed .....

Date .....

Chairman